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Ashley Pettingill

[apettingill@tunheim.com](mailto:apettingill@tunheim.com)

952.250.1547

**Wakpa Triennial Art Festival Announced for the Twin Cities**

*Public Art Saint Paul and partners create a cultural event to celebrate diverse artists and inspire new thinking*

**Saint Paul, Minnesota (October 5, 2022) –** Public Art Saint Paul (PASP), in partnership with national and local advisors, artists and organizational partners announce the Wakpa Triennial Art Festival, a new event featuring a series of temporary public art installations and indoor projects to be held in St. Paul, Minneapolis, and select satellite locations starting June 24, 2023, and running through September 16, 2023. Wakpa Triennial Art Festival will help raise the visibility of our art community, foster interchanges among visitors, and bring positive attention to St. Paul and Minneapolis neighborhoods and locations.

The name “Wakpa” adopts the Dakota word for “river,” chosen through a process of consultation among the project team of PASP staff and Board, local advisors, Dakota leaders and artists, and other stakeholders. Wakpa, was inspired by the region’s rich Dakota history and contemporary culture and the fact that the Twin Cities inhabits Dakota land. The name “river” speaks to the Mississippi River, one of the world’s largest and most legendary rivers, that defines the Twin Cities metro area and the lives of the people here.

The Wakpa Triennial will be a signature event for the Twin Cities, taking place every three years in a new form with a new theme. The event will feature approximately 35 temporary outdoor public art installations throughout the St. Paul and Minneapolis metro area by a diverse group of Minnesota-based artists, along with related gallery and museum projects presented primarily by small-to-mid-sized arts and cultural organizations.

Organizational partners include the Minnesota Museum of American Art, Wakan Tipi Center, Great River Passage, Indigenous Roots, Landmark Center, Springboard for the Arts, Asian Economic Development Association, Center for Hmong Art and Talent, Victoria Theater Art Center, All My Relations Gallery, Hennepin Theatre Trust, Dreamsong Gallery, Pangea World Theatre, and more.

“The theme for the inaugural event is “Network of Mutuality,” a phrase from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, which emphasizes social justice and interdependence,” said Colleen Sheehy, Executive Director of Public Art Saint Paul and Project Director of Wakpa Triennial Art Festival. “We want to engage audiences with experiences of new art that will foster conversations and reflection on what future we want to build in the Twin Cities. We are planning a series of “Critical Conversations” that will bring people together to share dreams and discuss how we can make them a reality. All of this will be sparked by the significant commissions and new projects that artists will present.”

With the strong art scene in St. Paul-Minneapolis, PASP is focusing the inaugural Triennial on Minnesota-based artists. The organization is excited to announce an initial roster of Triennial artists: Pramila Vasudevan, Monica Moses Haller, Xavier Tavera, Angela Two Stars, Mona Smith, and Aaron Dysart are participating artists in the inaugural Wakpa Triennial Art Festival. 80% of the Triennial artists will be artists of color, bringing strong voices to consider the Triennial theme and to spark conversations among audiences. Their artwork will be a means to reflect on social justice, relationships among people, and between humans and nature and to catalyze critical conversations about the kind of future we can build in the Twin Cities.

“The Triennial is a great opportunity to enjoy newly commissioned artistic works and explore our downtown corridor, riverfront, and neighboring communities,” said Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter. “We’re excited to welcome people to Saint Paul as we showcase the amazing art and artists that contribute to the vibrancy of our communities.”

Wakpa Triennial Art Festival is supported by the Joyce Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, St Paul and Minnesota Foundation, Saint Paul Cultural Star, Capitol Region Watershed District, Mairs & Power, Barr Engineering, and Founding Patrons Nancy and Steve Apfelbacher, Lisa Arnold and Hamlin Metzger, John and Ruth Huss, and Kay Thomas and Jim Rustad.

The majority of the events will be free and open to the public. Some special events and tours will be ticketed. For more information on Wakpa Triennial Art Festival, please visit [www.publicartstpaul.org/wakpa](http://www.publicartstpaul.org/wakpa).Connect with Wakpa Triennial Art on [Facebook](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fpublicartstpaul&data=05%7C01%7Capettingill%40tunheim.com%7Ca1d2721c535649904c3c08daa0bac953%7C871960ca158548a6b1d9a025f51e716c%7C1%7C0%7C637999021560109245%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gCYaSvTOGfGwe2jpGA7qKfavlo14j0x8QP7TKKgrwNk%3D&reserved=0) and [Instagram](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.instagram.com%2Fpublicartstpaul%2F&data=05%7C01%7Capettingill%40tunheim.com%7Ca1d2721c535649904c3c08daa0bac953%7C871960ca158548a6b1d9a025f51e716c%7C1%7C0%7C637999021560109245%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=tS2nxnYBGMnjDU3T26bWV0IvZIacjPnodBaf3rFThpo%3D&reserved=0).

**About Wakpa Triennial Art Festival:**

*Wakpa Triennial Art Festival is a signature art event in the Twin Cities, taking place every three years in a new form with a new theme. The Triennial takes place in multiple locations over three months featuring temporary outdoor public art displays created by a diverse group of artists, along with related gallery and museum projects presented by small to mid-sized arts and cultural organizations. The event is a showcase of the Twin Cities, instilling pride in the area through a cultural event that foregrounds artists as leaders who can spark ideas and promote creative thinking about our current conditions and future dreams.*